

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, from November 8, 1896, to November 8, 1896, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Beinn Bhreagh, C. B. Sunday, November 8, 1896. My darling Mabel:

I have only time for a few hurried words.

I invited the McCurdy children to come here yesterday and spend Sunday at Beinn Bhreagh. Yesterday and today the house has been musical with children's voices. Susie, George and Douglas are here — but Lucien was not very well and was kept at home.

Last night Miss McCurdy telephoned that Lucien had a high fever — and that the doctor had pronounced it Scarlet Fever.

The others seem quite well — but they may have to remain for some time.

There seems to be quite an epidemic of Scarlet Fever in town — and the school will probably be closed.

Neither Susie, nor George nor Douglas have had Scarlet Fever and I am wondering what we shall do should any of them take the disease. Mr. McCurdy himself has never had it. I believe that Miss McCurdy too is in the same condition. It is to be hoped therefore that the family tendency is against it.

I don't want to borrow trouble — but will quietly look over the rooms in the house to see which one could best be converted into a hospital should any one of the children succumb. Then there is Mr. Martin's cottage.

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2

Hope we can manage without having this house infected. Will look at Mr. Martin's tomorrow. If that would be unsuitable it might be better to use one of the rooms in the kitchen extension.

However all the children are well — and happy. Mrs. Kennan came over in the afternoon — and she and Susie joined Mr. McCurdy and me in a boat-row on the Bras d'Or. Mrs. Kennan staid to supper. Then we had some music — and a lecture upon Astronomy to Susie, followed by committing to memory some verses concerning the Signs of the Zodiac.

The ram, the bull, the flaming twins And next the crab and lion shines, The virgin and the scales. The Scorpion, arches and the goat The man that pours the water out, And Fish with glittering tails.”

Susie learned this by heart marching round and round the hall while saying it. George and Douglas were so much interested in hearing Susie that they too learned it by heart — and soon we had a procession of four headed by your humble servant marching in Indian file round and round the hall reciting in chorus “The ram, the bull, the flaming twins” and etc., etc., Then we looked over the pictures in one of Jules Verms story books — and I had to read extracts here and there. I became so much interested — that after the children went to bed — I read the book through myself — and have only now finished it — and find that it is time to go to bed although I haven't given a thought to flying machines or any work.

Your loving husband, Alec.